



Greenway Action Plan

The community of Asheville will need to complete a number of actions to successfully implement the recommendations contained within this plan. The hallmark of implementing a community-wide greenway system will be the formation of a public-private partnership that can serve as advocate, developer, and manager of the corridors that constitute the greenway system. This chapter describes how such a partnership could be established and operated and provides guidelines for such coordination to ensure the timely development of the community-wide network of greenways.

Accordingly, a phasing strategy for implementing the Asheville greenway system is defined. Phasing priorities are based on several factors, including current opportunities for funding, coordination with the efforts of NCDOT, and the creation of a connected greenway system. Priorities are meant to be flexible and could change as opportunities arise. This strategy incorporates the Master Plan recommendation of developing a minimum of two miles of greenway per year, on average, however, at this pace, build-out of the system will not occur at the end of Phase Three. At this time, an update to the Plan will be needed to determine future projects and priorities.



The following actions include only those greenway corridors identified within the primary greenway system for Asheville. However, neighborhood greenways which are strongly supported by local residents should also be considered high priorities. Neighborhood greenways should become priorities as opportunities arise. Higher priority neighborhood greenways currently include Beaucatcher Mountain (due to publicly owned lands) and Sweeten Creek Road (scheduled to be improved by DOT).

The Plan of Action

The Asheville Greenways Master Plan is a comprehensive, visionary plan which identifies potential greenway corridors throughout the City. To realize the vision laid forth in this plan, the following steps will need to be completed for each greenway corridor .

Step One - Land Protection: Before detailed master planning of an individual corridor occurs, it would be most desirable to have an ownership interest in the land that is to be included in the greenway. This may not always be possible, therefore it is essential that notification of landowners take place prior to beginning the master plan for an individual greenway corridor.

Step Two - Corridor Master Planning: Site specific master planning for individual greenway corridors would determine the appropriate level of use for the greenway and specific greenway and (if necessary) trail routing. Each master plan for a greenway corridor or segment of a corridor should involve residents from surrounding neighborhoods, as well as adjacent property owners and businesses.

Step Three - Design Development, Construction Documents, and Engineering: After master planning has been completed and a specific corridor plan has been defined, detailed construction documents would then be produced for the project.

Step Four - Construction and Facility Development - Depending on the level of use that is appropriate for a greenway corridor, actual construction of the greenway facilities, such as trails, habitat restoration, and streambank restoration would take place. Construction and development operations could be phased as necessary to meet budget and time constraints.

Step Five - Maintenance and Management - Once the greenway facilities have been completed, maintenance and management should begin immediately. A designated management agent should be identified, which could be a public agency, private organization, or partnership group.



Phase I: 1998-2000

Institutional Development

During the first two years of greenway program development, the community of Asheville will need to adopt this Plan as the guiding vision for action. The Greenways Advisory Committee should be established to assist the City in the implementation of Plan recommendations. Appropriate staffing and funding should also be defined to support the requirements of this Plan.

Land Protection

- Reed Creek/Broadway Greenway
- Haw Creek Greenway
- French Broad River Greenway
- Brevard Road Greenway
- Swannanoa River Greenway
- Haywood Road Greenway (including off-road section within West End Clingman Avenue neighborhood)

Corridor Master Planning

- Reed Creek/Broadway Greenway
- Haw Creek Greenway
- Swannanoa River Greenway
- Brevard Road Greenway
- Haywood Road Greenway (including off-road section within West End Clingman Avenue neighborhood)

Design Development

- French Broad River Greenway (Hominy Creek to Amboy Road)
- Brevard Road Greenway
- Haw Creek Greenway
- Reed Creek/Broadway Greenway
- Haywood Road Greenway (including off-road section within West End Clingman Avenue neighborhood)

Construction and Development

- French Broad River Greenway
- Haw Creek Greenway
- Reed Creek/Broadway Greenway
- Haywood Road Greenway (including off-road section within West End Clingman Avenue neighborhood)



Maintenance and Management

Existing greenways along the French Broad River and Weaver Boulevard should become part of the new management strategy outlined in this master plan. As future greenway segments come on line, they would also be in need of the same management strategy. Principally, the City should work to develop an adopt-a-greenway program. Additionally, inter-agency and other management agreements should be executed between the city and other local governments (See appendices of report).

Phase II: 2001-2003

Building on the success of the first two years of program operation, the next three years should be devoted to the completion of additional site-specific plans, the acquisition of additional land, and the construction of greenway facilities.

Land Protection

- Hominy Creek Greenway
- Hendersonville Road Greenway
- Nasty Branch Greenway

Corridor Master Planning

- Haywood Road Greenway
- Hendersonville Road Greenway
- Hominy Creek Greenway
- Kimberly Avenue Greenway
- Nasty Branch Greenway

Design Development

- Swannanoa River Greenway
- Haywood Road Greenway
- Kimberly Avenue
- Nasty Branch

Construction and Development

- Swannanoa River Greenway
- Haywood Road Greenway
- Kimberly Avenue Greenway
- Brevard Road Greenway

Maintenance and Management

The City and the Greenways Advisory Committee should work jointly to expand the adopt-a-greenway program. Also, programming of certain greenway corridors would be appropriate during this phase, and might include an annual “Greenway Day” event held in the Spring of each year.



Phase III: 2004-2008

Upon completion of the first five years of program operation, it will be important for the Asheville community to reflect on the successes of the greenway system. An updated Greenway Master plan should be completed and approved by the City and should serve as a future basis for action. The Greenways Advisory Committee should coordinate and champion an update to this master plan.

Land Protection

- Beaverdam Creek Greenway
- Emma Road Stream Greenway

Corridor Master Planning

(The majority of these are roadways and, therefore, planning needs to be coordinated with NCDOT.)

- Beaverdam Creek Greenway
- Town Mountain Road Greenway
- Emma Road Greenway
- Ashland Ave./McDowell St. Greenway

Design Development

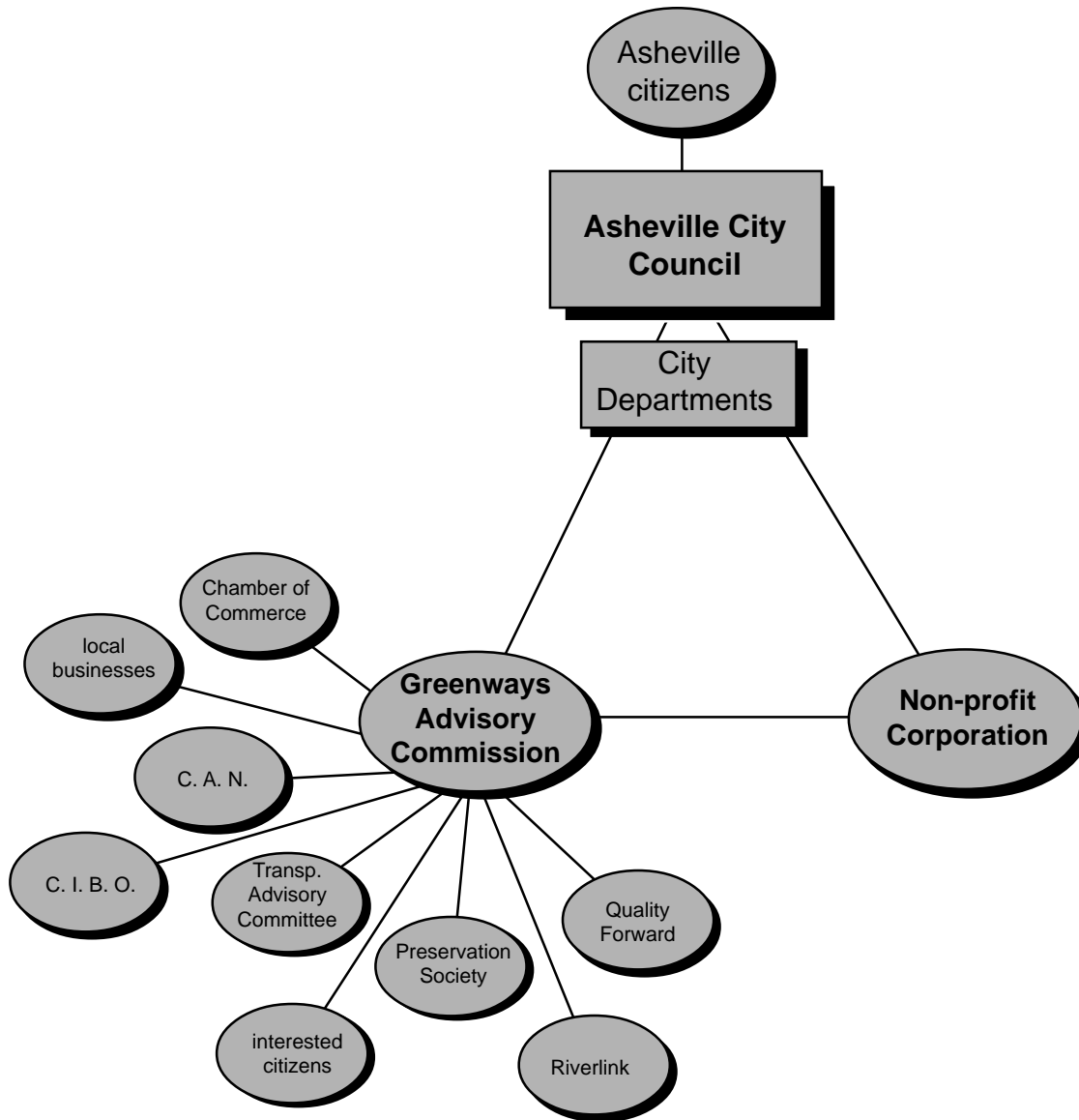
- Hominy Creek Greenway
- Beaverdam Creek Greenway
- Town Mountain Road Greenway
- Emma Road Stream Greenway
- Ashland Ave./McDowell St. Greenway
- Hendersonville Road Greenway

Construction and Development

- Hominy Creek Greenway
- Nasty Branch Greenway
- Beaverdam Creek Greenway
- Town Mountain Road Greenway
- Emma Road Stream Greenway
- Ashland Ave./McDowell St. Greenway
- Hendersonville Road Greenway

Maintenance and Management

A complete review of the maintenance and management system for greenways should be undertaken during this phase to better understand the effectiveness of the strategy and to make necessary adjustments.



Implementing Organization Chart



Implementation Strategy

Nationally, successful greenway systems have emerged through public-private partnerships that are developed to take advantage of the full complement of resources that are available within every community. Public-private partnerships enable greenway systems to be developed and managed in a cost-effective manner, creating ownership and investment throughout the community.

This Master Plan is progressive and ambitious. It will best be implemented through a public-private partnership. Successful implementation will require a concerted effort by the City of Asheville and private citizens who have the ability, influence and authority to guide the community toward acceptable multi-objective greenway solutions. Implementation of the greenway program should not be the sole burden of the City; to be truly successful it must become the collective pursuit of the entire community.

Representatives from the City of Asheville (including City staff and council members) and the Greenways Advisory Committee, established as part of this master planning effort, came together in September 1998 to create the following implementation strategy.

Role of the Non-profit Corporation

A private, non-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation will be formed to serve as a parks, recreation and greenways foundation. The purpose of the non-profit corporation will be to raise money from the private sector (individuals, businesses, foundations, etc.) for use on parks, recreation and greenway projects. The money raised from private sources will augment funds supplied through the City of Asheville.

The non-profit may have a limited staff, ideally funded from private sources, to pursue fund raising opportunities. Importantly, the Board of Directors of the non-profit would be comprised of individuals in the community who have proven track records of being able to raise substantial sums of money for worthwhile projects. Each Board member would be actively involved in fund raising. The original Board of Directors would be created by private citizens and not appointed by the City of Asheville. Although the non-profit would be independent of the City of Asheville, it would work together with City staff and the new Greenway Advisory Commission described on the next page.

Role of the Greenways Advisory Commission

The City of Asheville would create a new Greenways Advisory Commission, also comprised of private citizens. Members will be appointed by City Council, although some organizations in the community may have “standing” positions on the Commission. The purpose of the Commission will be to help prioritize greenway projects in the Greenway Master Plan, recommend projects and funding amounts to City Council, assist in right-of-way acquisition and, otherwise, be strong advocates for greenways. The Greenways Advisory Commission would work together with City staff.



Role of the City of Asheville

City staff will perform planning, design and management functions for the greenway system. Staff will work closely with both the non-profit corporation and Greenways Advisory Commission described above. It is strongly recommended that the City designate specific members of the Planning and/or Parks and Recreation Departments to work exclusively on greenways.

City Council would make the final decisions regarding funding and implementation of greenways, with due consideration being given to the recommendations of the Greenways Advisory Commission.

Role of the Mayor and City Council

The Mayor and City Council of Asheville shall appoint all members of the Greenways Advisory Commission. One member of the City Council shall also serve as a member of the Commission.

Role of City Manager

The Asheville City Manager is vested with management responsibilities for the community's public resources. As such, the primary role of the City Manager, with respect to the greenway system, would be to direct the activities of the various departments of the City as necessary to perform required acquisition, development, stewardship and maintenance activities for greenways.

Role of Parks and Recreation Department

The Parks and Recreation Department will work with the Greenways Advisory Commission and the Planning Department to prepare detailed corridor master plans and construction documents for each greenway segment. The Parks and Recreation Department should become the primary steward for greenway lands and facilities. However, due to the size and scope of this endeavor, it is strongly encouraged that the Parks and Recreation Department, in partnership with the Greenways Advisory Commission, establish an Adopt-a-Greenway Program. This Program would enlist the participation and support of other public and private sector organizations in managing and maintaining greenway lands and facilities.

Role of Planning Department

The Asheville Planning Department shall assist the Advisory Commission in achieving its objectives. The Planning Department should work with the Parks and Recreation Department and the Commission to prepare detailed corridor master plans for each of the greenway segments defined by this comprehensive master plan. The Planning Department should work with the Commission to periodically update the Master Plan map so



that it provides current information on the status of the community-wide system. The Planning Department should also work to coordinate the development of the greenway system with other land use planning initiatives of the City.

Role of Public Works Department

The Asheville Public Works Department will work with the Greenways Advisory Commission and the Planning Department in preparing recommended corridor plans in conjunction with the Pedestrian Thoroughfare Plan. The Public Works Department currently maintains city sidewalks and roads, the Urban Trail, adopt-a-street program, and Tree and Greenways Committee. The Department should work closely on coordinating any off-road greenway efforts with on-road greenway efforts. The Department should also work with the Greenways Advisory Commission on efforts to improve some of the identified “on-road” facilities.

Role of Police Department

The Asheville Police Department should work with the Parks and Recreation Department to coordinate patrol, safety education, and security systems for segments of the greenway system. The Police Department may wish to assign a qualified officer(s) to a bicycle patrol unit, that would assist with management of the greenway system.

Role of Advisors

The City of Asheville should seek assistance from qualified national and regional organizations and agencies that have a demonstrated expertise in greenway implementation. These groups could assist the City in the acquisition of land for the primary greenway system. They might also assist with fund raising, construction of facilities and management of greenway corridors. Potential advisors include the Trust for Public Land, National Park Service and Land of Sky Regional Council.

Role of Local Businesses and Corporations

Asheville businesses and corporations might choose to sponsor a segment of greenway for development or maintenance. Already, some businesses in Asheville are considering developing segments of greenway trail and, after completion, dedicating these segments to the City for ownership and maintenance. Businesses and corporations can work with the Greenways Committee to gift money, materials, products and labor toward the development of a greenway facility. Businesses can also consider installing facilities, such as bike racks or lockers, benches and signage that links their operations to the greenway system.



Role of Civic Organizations

Local civic groups and organizations, including the Junior League, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, garden clubs, YMCA, Kiwanis and Rotary Club's, to name a few, can be participants in the Asheville Greenways System. These organizations can play a vital role in building sections of greenway trails, maintaining and managing greenway lands and facilities, and co-hosting events that raise money for the greenway system. There are many ways in which civic organizations can participate in the development of the greenway system. The most appropriate involvement can be determined by matching the goals and objectives of each organization to the needs of the greenway program. The involvement of such organizations should be coordinated through the Greenways Advisory Commission.

Role of Individual Citizens

Local residents who are interested in the development of Asheville's Greenway System can participate by agreeing to donate their time, labor, and expertise to the Greenways Commission or the non-profit corporation. Residents might choose to partner with a friend or form a local neighborhood group that adopts a section of greenway for maintenance and management purposes. Individuals could be deputized by the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department as Trail Rangers, to help patrol trails during daylight hours. Individuals can volunteer to plant trees, shrubs and flowers along segments of greenways. All volunteer efforts would be recognized by the Greenways Advisory Commission through a community-wide program.



Land Protection Strategy

The City of Asheville should pursue a land protection strategy of acquiring property or interest in property for the greenways on a voluntary, willing seller basis. While implementing such an acquisition strategy can be a time-consuming process, it will result in more harmonious relationships with private landowners within the proposed greenway corridors and, in the long-term, result in increased support for greenways. Once owners of property learn about the potential benefits of the greenway — including potential tax benefits, the possibility for the development of greenway-related businesses on adjacent property, the potential increase in the value of property adjacent to the greenway, and enhanced marketability for residential properties with access to the greenway — experience with the acquisition of other greenways throughout the country has shown that landowners will be willing to work cooperatively with the City to protect land for greenways. The acquisition strategy and process used for the Reed Creek/Broadway Greenway should serve as a model for land protection for other greenway corridors.

When seeking to undertake the assemblage of multiple parcels for a linear greenway corridor, the City will undoubtedly encounter private landowners who are unwilling to convey their property or an interest in their property for the greenway. In these cases, an alternate alignment for the greenway to bypass the property of such landowners should be sought.

Numerous land acquisition techniques have been successfully used by government agencies and nonprofit organizations to protect land for greenways. The techniques typically used to protect lands for greenways are described below.

Conservation easements - A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and the City that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation or recreation values and conveys a permanent right of public access across the property for the greenway.

Importantly, under a conservation easement, the land remains in private ownership, while the public gains the right of access across the land for greenway purposes. When a landowner donates or sells a conservation easement, he or she permanently gives up some of the rights associated with the land. For example, the landowner might give up the right to build additional residences within a greenway corridor, while retaining the right to grow crops or graze cattle. Future owners will be bound by the easement terms, and the City is responsible for making sure the easement terms are followed. Conservation easements are flexible land protection tools. An easement must protect the land's conservation and recreational values, but can also be tailored to meet the financial and personal needs of the landowner.



The donation of a conservation easement for the greenway may qualify as a tax deductible charitable contribution, resulting in federal income tax benefits for the landowner. Landowners may also gain reduced property taxes and estate tax benefits by the donation of a conservation easement.

Land donation - An outright donation of land for the greenway may be the best land protection strategy if the landowner does not wish to pass the land along to heirs; owns property he or she no longer uses; owns highly appreciated property; has substantial real estate holdings and wishes to reduce the potential estate tax burden; or would like to be relieved of the responsibility of caring for the land. A donation of land to the City for the greenway releases the landowner from the responsibility of managing the land. Donation of land for the greenway may qualify for tax deductible charitable donation, resulting in federal income tax benefits for the landowner, while avoiding any capital gains taxes that would have resulted from selling the property. A donation of land may also provide estate tax benefits by reducing the value of the landowners estate.

Bargain sale - A bargain sale of land for the greenway — sale by the landowner of land to the City for less than the appraised fair market value of the land — combines the income-producing benefit of a sale with the tax-reducing benefits of a donation. If the landowner needs to realize some immediate income from his or her land, yet would like the land to go to the City for the greenway, a bargain sale may be the best land protection technique. In a bargain sale, the landowner sells the land for a reduced price, making acquisition of the property more affordable for the City, but offering several benefits to the landowner. A bargain sale provides cash to the landowner, avoids some capital gains tax, and provides a potential charitable income tax deduction based on the difference between the land's fair market value and its sale price.

Fee simple acquisition - This technique involves the outright sale of land by a private landowner to the City for the greenway based upon an agreed upon price.

The City of Asheville should first seek to secure outright donations or donations of conservation easements from all landowners in the greenway corridors. Those landowners willing to make a donation of land or a conservation easement should be approached first in seeking to protect land for the greenway. Failing these techniques, the City should pursue other techniques for acquisition of land for the greenway.